Chartered Patent Agents
European Patent Attorneys
Trade Mark Agents

Telephone 071-242 0901
Fax 071-242 3290/0286
Telex 25445
DX 280

Reddie & Grose

16 Theobalds Road
London WC1X 8PL

P. Antony Smith M.A.
F.A.B. Valentine M.A.
Richard C. Abnett M.A.
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Andrew G. White B.Eng.

Consultants
David A. Pears M.A.
John H. Bass B.Sc.

Our VAT No. GB 243 9087 49

AIRMAIL
James E.Schardt Esq
Assistant General Counsel
Philip Morris Mgt Corp
P.O.Box 26583
Richmond
Virginia 23261-6583
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

3rd June 1993

JHB/HM/33314

Dear Jim

PM 1360 EPO
Our File: 33314

Thank you for your letter of 22nd March 1993 instructing to pay the examination fee on this application.

This payment has been arranged and your account will be debited in the usual way. At this time however, it seems that we should dispose of the question of voluntary amendment, which was raised by Beverley Monroe in her letter of 15th June 1992 and referred to in my letter of 1st December 1992.

A review of the file leaves me in some doubt as to what the proposed amendment actually was. The claims of this and other foreign applications were substantially rearranged before filing in order to bring them into line with European and similar practices. As a result, this application was filed with 27 claims, of which a copy is now enclosed. These contain two independent claims, namely, claim 1 characterised by ignition and combustion temperatures and claim 14 characterised by the chemical composition of the heat source. At the same time, the introduction to the specification was amended to take account of the existence of these two independent ways of characterising the invention, as discussed in my letter of 15th April 1992.

It is possible that the idea of voluntary amendment originated from the fairly extensive discussion of the claims at the time of filing. Moreover, I must confess that I was prepared for an objection of plurality of invention at the searching stage which, in the event was not raised. I can only conclude that the field in which the search had to be made was so narrow that the Examiner found no difficulty in searching both independent claims among the small corpus of related art.

My own feeling at this time is that, having revised the claims and the introduction at the time of filing, and having received no objection to the claims at the searching stage, there is nothing in the internal history of the European application to suggest that any voluntary amendment should be filed now.

Accordingly, the desirability of amendment at this stage could arise only from experience with the corresponding US application. I was informed that the US application had been found in order for allowance in March 1992 and, if nothing further has emerged since then, I suggest that we should do nothing at the present time with the text of the European application, or indeed any of the foreign applications.

Unless I hear from you to the contrary I shall assume that you wish the European application to go forward for examination with its present text.

Yours sincerely

P. Bass Smith

for

J.H.Bass

cc. Marta E.Gross Esq - Fish & Neave